

**DISTINGUISHED HUMANITARIAN ADDRESS DELIVERED
BY WIFE OF THE GOVERNOR OF OYO STATE, HER
EXCELLENCY, DR. (MRS.) FLORENCE AJIMOBİ (JP) AT
2018 HUMAN TRAFFICKING DAY ORGANIZED BY LIVE
ABUNDANTLY EMPOWERMENT INITIATIVE IN
COLLABORATION WITH MINISTRY OF WOMEN
AFFAIRS, HELD ON MONDAY 30TH JULY, 2018 AT
CIVIC CENTRE, İDI APE, İBADAN.**

PROTOCOLS

- 1.** It is a great pleasure to be your midst today at the celebration of this year's Human Trafficking Day organised by Live Abundantly Empowerment Initiative in collaboration with the Ministry of Women Affairs, Community Development, Social Welfare and Poverty Alleviation.
- 2.** Over the years, Human Trafficking has become an issue of global concern and that is why the United Nation's declared that every year, a day, the 30th of July to be precise, must be set aside to create awareness and sensitise the populace on the dangers involved in this inhumane act.
- 3.** Human Trafficking which is a form of modern day slavery is not only viewed as a trans-national crime, but also as an enormous violation of human rights. Unfortunately, our dear

nation Nigeria is a source, transit and destination country for persons, particularly women and children subjected to trafficking. Such persons are exposed to hazardous tasks such as forced labour and prostitution which have detrimental effects on their mental and emotional wellbeing.

- 4.** In recent times, trafficking has become a fundamental challenge which is facilitated by porous borders and undermines the safety and security of all the nations concerned as it involves the act of recruiting, transporting, transferring, and harbouring of victims through the use of force, deception or other means in order to exploit them for economic gains.
- 5.** Traffickers usually target women and children; they are sold and brought to provide cheap labour and worst of all, to be sexually exploited.
- 6.** According to a global research, an estimated 20.9 million people are currently living in modern day slavery, they are stripped of their dignity and humanity, forced to work effectively without pay and are sometimes deprived of their freedom. Children in these conditions are denied their rights to education, health care and others as enshrined in the Child Rights Law 2006. Most of them become

vulnerable and subjected to sexual abuse and extreme forms of child labour. Similarly, UNICEF estimated that there are about 15 million child workers and over 25 Million trafficked adults, both men and women, across the world.

7. Needless to say, this gruesome trade has several devastating effects both on the victims and the nations concerned. It is estimated that about 80% of the victims of trafficking are sexually exploited, abused or forced into prostitution as most victims are young women and girls. The use of sexual protection is negligible in this industry, leaving the exploited at a high risk of contracting various sexually transmitted diseases and HIV/AIDS which they further pass on to their partners. In some cases, victims are also subjected to substance abuse by being forced to take drugs. Such individuals also have to constantly battle with drug addiction. Furthermore, poor living conditions as well as little or no provision of medical care contribute to the development of various diseases. Apart from the physiological damage caused, the mental and emotional wellbeing of the victims are also seriously jeopardized.

- 8.** According to the International Labor Organization (ILO), human trafficking generates \$31.6 billion estimated illicit profit worldwide. The victims are paid paltry wages for strenuous physical labor which prevents them from escaping. Availability of such cheap labour hinders employment opportunities and subsequently, reduces per capita income of the nation. Illegal immigration is also a threat to national security and a cause of concern for governments worldwide. It gives rise to other ills such as terrorism, poverty, poor living standards, unemployment, expanding population, wastage of resources, high crime rates, and lack of enforcement of law and order in the country. These factors slow down the economic growth of the nation. Above all, it results in a loss of valuable human resources and an undue waste of productivity and development. In fact, it is a disgrace to humanity.
- 9.** The State Government under the leadership of our amiable father and Governor, Senator Abiola Ajimobi has been working tirelessly to put all necessary machineries in place with a view to reducing this social ill to the barest minimum.
- 10.** Recently, a multisectoral committee comprising of the Ministries of Information and Women Affairs, Community

Relations Department of the Governor's office, various security agencies, National Association of Nigeria Travel Agencies (NANTA), National agency for the Prohibition of Trafficking in Persons (NAPTIP) and other relevant stakeholders was set up with a view to finding ways to eliminate this scourge as well as fish out traffickers.

11. In the same vein, various sensitization and awareness programs are being carried out to educate and enlighten the public on the dangers of trafficking and the importance of waging war against traffickers who capitalize on the ignorance of the citizens to exploit them and enrich themselves.

12. Let me at this point appreciate the Organisers of this programme, Live Abundantly Empowerment Initiative for putting this together and for their commitment over the years to eradicating human trafficking. May the good Lord continue to uphold you and bless you abundantly.

13. In conclusion, I would like to appeal to the citizens of Oyo State and the nation at large to join hands together with the government and all other stakeholders to fight this menace. I implore everyone to open their eyes wide so that they do not fall into the hands of traffickers and also

reported suspected cases of trafficking to the nearest Security Agencies or the Ministry of Women Affairs for help.

14. I thank you all for your attention.